

Honorable Toni Walker

Dear Senator Walker:

Under the current budget proposal for the State Library, the resource sharing service known as Connecticut – Card/C-Card is being zeroed out. The elimination of this service on its face would save the Governor almost \$800,000. On its face...

What zeroing out this service actually does is destroy over four decades of knitting Connecticut libraries together through the principle of sharing resources with one another's patrons. Under C-Card residents have the freedom to borrow library items directly from any public library in the state, not just their home town one. In 1973, as well as for today, this program was conceived to create equitable access to knowledge through shared materials. It means that a student in New Haven may come to the Clark Memorial Library in Bethany and borrow a textbook on Physics, use that book at her home, return it to her local branch of the New Haven Free Public Library, and get that score of a 5 on her Physics AP exam. The book at no cost to her will be returned to the library in Bethany through the state's delivery program.

It costs public libraries to do this kind of sharing. Municipalities pick up 80% of the cost and the state takes up the other 20%. A library spends over a dollar an item to lend it out to a non-resident. To support public libraries' endeavor to create knowledge equity, the state reimburses less than a quarter of that cost. Public libraries and our municipal funders believe that this resource sharing is worth it because it is reciprocal.